

THE
COUNT OF NARBONNE,
A TRAGEDY.

AS IT IS ACTED
AT THE THEATRE ROYAL
IN DRURY LANE.

By ROBERT JEPHSON, Esq.



THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

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MDCCCLXXXVII.



TO
THE HONOURABLE
HORACE WALPOLE,
THIS TRAGEDY IS INSCRIBED,
WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT
AND GRATITUDE,
BY HIS MOST OBLIGED
AND VERY OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANT,

Dublin Castle,
Nov. 17, 1782.

ROBERT JEPHSON.

A





P R O L O G U E.

Written by Mr. JEPHSON.

*O*F all who strive to please the publick ear,
Most bold is he who dares attempt it here ;
Where four tribunals, a tremendous show,
Plain folk above, and finer folk below,
All sit to try an anxious author's cause,
Each by its own, and all by different laws.
This beauteous circle, friends to polish'd verse,
Admires soft sentiments in language terse ;
While the stern Pit all ornament disdains,
And loves deep pathos, and sublimer strains.
The middle order, free from critick pride,
Take genuine nature for their faithful guide ;
At ears and eyes they drink the full delight,
And judge, but as they feel, of wrong and right :
While those above them, honest souls ! delight in
Processions, bustle, trumpets, drums, and fighting.
Hard as it is, we think our play to-night
Has something fit for every appetite.—
For tender souls are tender griefs prepar'd, [To the Boxes.
And scenes of direr woe for breasts more hard ; [To the Pit.
By interesting your passions, we must try
[To the Middle Gallery.
To bribe the heart while we defraud the eye ;
And though no trumpets sound, nor drums will rattle,
You, friends, shall hear of a most desperate battle.

[To the Upper Gallery.

P R O L O G U E.

*Thus provident for all, we trust you'll own,
Our poet's zeal may for some faults atone.
In this, at least, he hopes you'll all agree,
To shield him from the critick's treachery;
Who, with sly rules upon your judgement stealing,
Would set your pride against your honest feeling;
Would shame the generous drops that swell your eyes,
And teach you your own virtues to despise.*

*Permit me, ere I go, one short relation,
And just three words by way of application.
A home-spun country 'squire, who took his stand
To see a dext'rous juggler's sleight of hand,
Was thus accosted by an envious wight,
Who sought to hurt the artist from pure spight:
" Sir, for these tricks I'll presently expose them;
" There's nothing in't, I'll show you how he does them."
How think you the proposal was receiv'd?
" No, (says the 'squire) I pay to be deceiv'd."
Thus wit, which favour'd authors would condemn,
Mean nothing kind to you, but spleen to them:
Then still mistrust, whate'er he may profess,
The friend who strives to make your pleasure less.*

P R O L O G U E*,
INTENDED FOR
THE COUNT OF NARBONNE,

Written by the Rt. Hon. LUKE GARDINER.

*WHENCE comes it that our bards old times explore,
And choose their tragick tales from days of yore?
Is there nor vice nor virtue, now, to raise
The poet's indignation, or his praise?
Is Generosity, is Honour fled,
Are Jealousy, Revenge, Ambition dead?
Or by the willow'd brook, or in the grove,
Sighs there no nymph or swain for hopeless love?
There does,—and urge the opposite who can,
Nature is nature still, and man is man.*

*Yet such are we, that objects, ever new,
Passing in bright succession to our view,
Delight us not, 'till they at distance stand,
Remov'd by sacred Time's mysterious hand.
The pond'rous statue, if beheld too near,
Would but a huge, mishapen mass appear;
Yet plac'd aloft on the high temple's brow,
The rugged rock is graceful Venus now.
What odours the Arabian coasts dispense,
Which, breath'd too near, o'erpower and pall the sense!*

But

* This Prologue, not arriving in London, time enough for the first exhibition of the COUNT of NARBONNE, was not spoken.

P R O L O G U E.

*But if at sea the breeze their sweets exhale,
Vigour and life ride on the perfum'd gale.
Antiquity can thus her sweets impart,
Sweep o'er the expanse of Time, and charm the heart.*

*But look around, the sister arts pursue
The great antique, and keep her still in view:
Rehoid on canvass Mira's charms display'd,
A Grecian altar flames beside the maid!
Though Mira's eyes and auburn locks are there,
'Tis Flora's drapery, 'tis Juno's air;
Through every touch the ancient forms we trace,
And English beauty's deck'd with Attick grace.*

*Nor does the Gothick taste neglected lie;
Still York and Lincoln's ailes delight the eye;
Ev'n modern mansions to this stile are chang'd,
Th' indented battlements in order rang'd;
The fretted roof, the pointed turrets rise,
And in fantastick grandeur pierce the skies.*

*That æra marks the story of our play,
Which here the Tragick Muse unfolds to-day:
Yet ere the fable was to verse consign'd,
'Twas by a master's skilful hand design'd;
Who now, retir'd, neglects the wreath of fame,
And more than Poet, shuns a Poet's name.*

*If by this visionary tale to prove
The sacred rights of hymenæal love;
If the deep workings of the heart to scan,
And curb the passions of that tyrant, Man;
If to avenge a virtuous fair one's cause,
From generous sympathy deserve applause,
Our poet in this isle must favour meet,
Where Chastity has fixed her chosen seat;
Where Beauty clad in virtue's garb appears,
And Cyprus' queen Diana's crescent wears.*

THE story of this tragedy is taken from THE CASTLE
OF OTRANTO, an admirable romance, written by the Ho-
nourable HORACE WALPOLE.



Persons Represented.

Raymond, <i>Count of Narbonne,</i>	Mr. KEMBLE.
Austin, <i>a Priest,</i>	Mr. BENSLEY.
Theodore, <i>a Peasant,</i>	{ Mr. BANNISTER, Junior.
Fabian, <i>an old Servant of the Count,</i>	Mr. PACKER.
First Officer,	Mr. PHILLIMORE.
Second Officer,	Mr. BENSON.
Hortensia, <i>Countess of Narbonne,</i>	Mrs. SIDDONS.
Adelaide, <i>Daughter of the Count and</i>	{ Mrs. CROUCH.
Countess,	
Jacqueline, <i>her Attendant,</i>	Miss TIDSWELL.

Attendants, &c.

SCENE, Narbonne Castle, and the Monastery of Saint
Nicholas, adjoining the Castle.

THE
COUNT OF NARBONNE,
A TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A Hall with Gothick ornaments; a full length picture of
Alphonso in armour, in the center of the back scene.*

COUNT, *as he enters, speaking to an Officer; FABIAN following.*

COUNT.

—NOT to be found! is this your faithful service?
How could she pass unseen? By hell, 'tis false;
Thou hast betray'd me.

OFFICER.

Noble sir! my duty—

COUNT.

Your fraud, your negligence,—away, reply not.
Find her within this hour; else, by my life,
The gates of Narbonne shall be clos'd against thee;
Then make the world thy country. [Exit OFFICER.
Fabian stay!

B

Mis-

Misfortunes fall so thick upon my head,
They will not give me time to think, to breathe.

FABIAN.

Heaven knows I wish your peace; but am to learn,
What grief more fresh than my young lord's decease
(A sorrow but of three days pass'd) can move you.

COUNT.

O bitter memory! gone, gone for ever!
The pillar of my house, my only son!

FABIAN.

'Twas terrible indeed.

COUNT.

Ay, was it not?

And then the manner of it; think on that:
Disease, that robb'd me of two infant sons,
Approaching slow, bade me prepare to lose them;
I saw my lilies drooping; and, accusom'd
To see them dying, bore to see them dead:
But O my Edmund!—Thou remember'st, Fabian,
How blithe he went to seek the forest's sport.

FABIAN.

Would I could not remember;

COUNT.

That curst Barb
(My fatal gift) that dash'd him down the cliff,
Seem'd proud of his gay burden. Breathless, mangled,
They bore him back to me. Fond man! I hoped
This day his happy match with Isabel
Had made our line perpetual; and, this day,
The unfruitful grave receives him. Yes, 'tis fate;
That dreadful denunciation 'gainst my house
No prudence can avert, nor prayers can soften.

FABIAN.

FABIAN.

Think not on that ; some visionary's dream.
 What house, what family could e'er know peace,
 If each enthusiast's ravings were believ'd,
 And frenzy deem'd an insight of the future?
 But may I dare to ask, is it of moment
 To stir your anger thus, that Isabel
 Has left the castle?

COUNT.

Of the deepest moment;
 My best hope hangs on her ; some future time,
 I may instruct thee why.—These cares unhinge me.
 Just now, a herald from her angry father
 Left me this dire election,—to resign
 My titles, and this ample signory,
 (Worthy a monarch's envy,) or to meet him,
 And try my right by arms. But pr'ythee tell,
 (Nor let a fear to wound thy master's pride
 Restrain thy licens'd speech,) hast thou e'er heard
 My father Raymond—cast not down thine eye—
 By any indirect or bloody means
 Procur'd that instrument, Alphonso's will,
 That made him heir to Narbonne?

FABIAN.

My best lord,
 At all times would I fain with-hold from you
 Intelligence unwelcome, but most now.
 At seasons such as this, a friendly tongue
 Should utter words like balm ; but what you ask—

COUNT.

I ask to be inform'd of. Hast thou known me
 From childhood up to man, and canst thou fear
 I am so weak of soul, like a thin reed,

B 2

To

THE COUNT

To bend and stagger at each puny blast?
 No; when the tempest rages round my head,
 I give my branches wider to the air,
 And strike my root more deeply.—To thy tale:
 Away with palliatives and compliment;—
 Speak plainly.

FABIAN.

Plainly then, my lord, I have heard
 What for the little breath I have to draw,
 I would not, to the black extent of rumour,
 Give credit to.—But you command me speak—

COUNT.

Thy pauses torture me.—Can I hear worse
 Than this black scroll contains; this challenge here
 From Isabella's father, haughty Godfrey?
 In broad and unambiguous words he tells me
 My father was a murderer, and forg'd
 Alphonso's testament.

FABIAN.

From Palestine
 That tale crept hither; where, foul slander says,
 The good Alphonso, not, as we believe,
 Died of a fever, but a venom'd draught,
 Your father, his companion of the cross,
 Did with his own hand mingle; his hand too
 (Assisted by some cunning practisers)
 Modell'd that deed, which, barring Godfrey's right,
 And other claims from kindred, nam'd Count Raymond
 Lord of these fair possessions.

COUNT.

Ha! I have it;
 'Tis Godfrey's calumny; he has coin'd this lie;
 And his late visit to the holy land,

No

No doubt, has furnish'd likelihood of proof,
To give his fiction colour.

FABIAN.

Sure 'tis so.

COUNT.

He too has forg'd this idle prophecy,
(To shake me with false terrors) this prediction,
Which but to think of used to freeze my veins;
"That no descendant from my father's loins
"Should live to see a grandson, nor heav'n's wrath
"Cease to afflict us, till Alphonso's heir
"Succeeded to his just inheritance."
Hence Superstition mines my tottering state,
Loosens my vassals' faith, and turns their tears,
Which else would fall for my calamities,
To gloomy pause, and gaping reverence:
While all my woes, to their perverted sense,
Seem but the marvellous accomplishment
Of revelation, out of nature's course.

FABIAN.

Reason must so interpret. Good my lord,
What answer was return'd to Godfrey's challenge?

COUNT.

Defiance.

FABIAN.

Heaven defend you!

COUNT.

Heaven defend me!

I hope it will; and this right arm to boot.
But, hark I hear a noise—Perhaps my people
Have found the fugitive.—Haste; bid them enter.

[Exit FABIAN.]

B 3

SCENE

THE COUNT

SCENE II.

COUNT, *alone.*

She eyed me with abhorrence; at the sound
 Of love, of marriage, fled indignant from me.
 Yet I must win her: should she meet my wish,
 Godfrey would prop the right he strives to shake,
 Securing thus to his fair daughter's issue
 All that now hangs on the sword's doubtful point.
 Her beauty too, each soft attractive grace,
 I saw with jealous pleasure, even when destin'd
 To my son's arms. His death removes one bar;
 And, fortune to my double aim conspiring,
 I'll silence faucy conscience.

SCENE III.

*To the COUNT, FABIAN, Officer, and Attendants, bringing in
 a young Peasant.*

Now, what tidings?

Where is the lady?

OFFICER.

We have search'd in vain
 The castle round; left not an aile or vault
 Unvisited.

COUNT.

Damnation!

OFFICER.

Near the cloister,
 From whence by the flat door's descent, a passage
 Beneath the ground leads onward to the convent,

We

OF NARBONNE.

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We heard the echo of a falling weight,
And fought it by the sound.

COUNT.

Well, and what then?

OFFICER.

The unsettled dust left us no room to doubt
The door had just been rais'd.

COUNT.

She has escap'd

And by confed'racy: to force that bar,
Without more aid, had baffled twice her strength,
Go on.

OFFICER.

We enter'd; with resistance bold,
This peasant push'd us backward from the spot.
My arm was rais'd to smite him, but respect
For something in his aspect check'd the blow.
He, chiding, parlying by turns, gave time
For whosoever had descended there
(The lady doubtless) to elude our search;
The rest himself will tell.

COUNT. *[To the Peasant.]*

Ha! what art thou?

PEASANT.

It seems thy prisoner: disengage me first
From their rude gripe, and I may tell thee more.

COUNT.

Unhand him. I should know thee; I have seen
Features like thine. Answer me, wert thou found
As these men say?

PEASANT.

I was.

B 4

COUNT

COUNT.

And what thy purpose?

PEASANT.

Chance brought me there.

COUNT.

And did chance lead thee too

To aid a fugitive?

PEASANT.

They saw not that.

COUNT.

They saw it not! How! could her delicate hands,
Weak, soft, and yielding to the gentlest touch,
Sustain that pond'rous mass? No; those tough arms,
Thy force, assisted; else, thou young dissembler——

PEASANT.

She had been seiz'd, and by compulsion brought
Where I stand now.

COUNT.

Thou dost avow it then,

Boast it even to my face, audacious stripling!
Such insolence and these coarse rustick weeds
Are contradictions. Answer me, who art thou?

PEASANT.

Less than I should be; more than what I seem.

COUNT.

Hence with this faucy ambiguity.
What is thy name, thy country? That mean habit
(Which should teach humbleness) speaks thy condition.

PEASANT.

My name is Theodore, my country France;
My habit little suited to my mind,
Less to my birth; yet fit for my condition.

COUNT.

C O U N T.

O, thou art then some young adventurer,
 Some roving knight, a hero in disguise,
 Who, scorning forms of vulgar ceremony,
 No leave obtain'd, waiting no invitation,
 Enters our castles, wanders o'er our halls,
 To succour dames distress'd, or pilfer gold.
 Where are your train, your pages, and your squires?
 Perhaps but poorly lodg'd! I am to blame;
 But must excuse my scanty courtesy,
 By ignorance of your high character.

P E A S A N T.

There is a source of reverence for thee here,
 Forbids me, though provok'd, retort thy taunts.

C O U N T.

If I endure this more, I shall grow vile
 Even to my hinds——

P E A S A N T.

Hold, let me stop thy wrath,
 I see thy quivering lip, thy fiery eye,
 Forerun a storm of passion. To prevent thee
 From terms too harsh, perhaps, for thee to offer,
 Or me to hear (poor as I seem) with honour,
 I will cut short thy interrogatories,
 And on this theme give thee the full extent
 Of all I know, or thou canst wish to learn.

C O U N T.

Do it,

P E A S A N T.

Without a view to thwart thy purpose
 (Be what it might), was I within thy walls.
 In a dim passage of the castle-aisles
 Musing alone, I heard a hasty tread,

And

And breath drawn short, like one in fear of peril,
 A lady enter'd, (fair she seem'd, and young,)
 Guiding her timorous footsteps by a lamp,
 "The lord, the tyrant of this place (she cried)
 "For a detested purpose follows me;
 "Aid me good youth:" then, pointing to the ground,
 "That door (she added) leads to sanctuary."
 I seiz'd an iron hold, and, while I tugg'd
 To heave the unwilling weight, I learn'd her title.

COUNT,

The lady Isabel?

PEASANT.

The same. A gleam,
 Shot from their torches who pursued her track,
 Prevented more; she hasten'd to the cave,
 And vanish'd from my sight.

COUNT.

And did no awe,
 No fear of him she call'd this castle's lord,
 Its tyrant, chill thee?

PEASANT.

Awe nor fear I know not,
 And trust shall never; for I know not guilt.

COUNT.

Then thou, it seems, art master here, not I;
 Thou canst control my projects, blast my schemes,
 And turn to empty air my power in Narbonne.
 Nay, should my daughter choose to fly my castle,
 Against my bidding, guards and bolts were vain:
 This frize-clad champion, gallant Theodore,
 Would lend his ready arm, and mock my caution.

PEASANT.

OF NARBONNE.

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PEASANT.

Thy daughter! O, I were indeed too blest'd,
Could I but live to render her a service!

COUNT.

My daughter would, I hope, disdain thy service.

PEASANT.

Wherefore am I to blame? What I have done,
Were it to do again, again I'd do it.
And may this arm drop palsied by my side,
When its cold sinews shrink to aid affliction!

COUNT.

Indeed!

PEASANT.

Indeed. Frown on. Ask thy own heart,—
Did innocence and beauty bend before thee,
Hunted and trembling, would'st thou tamely pause,
Scanning pale counsel from deliberate fear,
And weigh each possibility of danger?
No; the instinctive nobleness of blood
Would start beyond the reach of such cold scruples,
And instant gratify its generous ardour.

COUNT.

I must know more of this. His phrase, his look,
His steady confidence, raise something here,
Bids me beware of him.—I have no time
To bandy idle words with slaves like thee.
I doubt not thy intent was mischievous;
Booty perhaps, or blood. Till more enquiry
Clear or condemn him, hold him in your guard.
Give none admittance—Take him from my fight.

I

PEASANT.

THE COUNT

PEASANT.

Secure in her integrity, my soul
 Casts back thy mean suspicions, and forgives thee.

[THEOEORE *is led out.*

SCENE IV.

COUNT, FABIAN.

COUNT.

Away with him.—What means this heaviness?
 My heart, that, like a well-trim'd gallant bark,
 Was wont to mount the waves, and dash them off
 In ineffectual foam, now seems to crack,
 And let in each assailing tide to sink me.
 I must not yield to this dull lethargy.
 Good Fabian, hie thee to Saint Nicholas';
 Bid holy Austin straight repair to me. [Exit FABIAN,

SCENE V.

COUNT *alone.*

His sanctity, and reverend character,
 His pious eloquence, made engines for me,
 Might save a world of anguish to my soul,
 And smooth my unwelcome purpose to Hortensia,
 But how prevail with him!—Ambition?—No;
 The world is dead in him, and gold is trash
 To one who neither needs nor values it.
 Interest and love shall wear the guise of conscience;
 I must pretend nice scruples which I feel not,
 And make him mediate for me with the Church.
 Yet he reveres the Countess; and, I fear,
 Will spy more sin in doubts that wound her quiet,

Than

Than in my stifling them. But see, she comes,
With downcast eye, and sad dejected mien.
I will not yet disclose it.

SCENE VI.

To him the COUNTESS.

Where's my child,
My all of comfort now, my Adelaide?

COUNTESS.

Dear as she is, I would not have her all;
For I should then be nothing. Time has been,
When, after three long days of absence from you,
You would have question'd me a thousand times,
And bid me tell each trifle of myself;
Then, satisfied at last that all were well,
At last, unwilling, turn to meaner cares.

COUNT.

This is the nature still of womankind;
If fondness be their mood, we must cast off
All grave-complexion'd thought, and turn our souls
Quite from their tenour to wild levity;
Vary with all their humours, take their hues,
As unsubstantial Iris from the sun;
Our bosoms are their passive instruments;
Vibrate their strain, or all our notes are discord.

COUNTESS.

O why this new unkindness? From thy lips
Never till now fell such ungentle words,
Nor ever less was I prepar'd to meet them.

COUNT.

Never till now was I so urg'd beset,
Hemm'd round with perils.

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

Ay, but not by me.

COUNT.

By thee, and all the world. But yesterday,
 With uncontrollable and absolute sway
 I rul'd this province, was the unquestion'd lord
 Of this strong castle, and its wide domains,
 Stretch'd beyond sight around me; and but now,
 The axe, perhaps, is sharp'ning, may hew down
 My perish'd trunk, and give the soil I sprung from,
 To cherish my proud kinsman Godfrey's roots.

COUNTESS.

Heaven guard thy life! His dreadful summons reach'd me.
 This urg'd me hither. On my knees I beg,
 (And I have mighty reasons for my prayer,)
 O do not meet him on this argument:
 By gentler means strive to divert his claim;
 Fly this detested place, this house of horror,
 And leave its gloomy grandeur to your kinsman.

COUNT.

Rise, fearful woman. What! renounce my birth-right?
 Go forth, like a poor friendless banish'd man,
 To gnaw my heart in cold obscurity!
 Thou weak adviser! Should I take thy counsel,
 Thy tongue would first upbraid, thy spirit scorn me.

COUNTESS.

No, on my soul!—Is Narbonne all the world?
 My country is where thou art; place is little:
 The sun will shine, the earth produce its fruits
 Cheerful, and plenteously, where'er we wander.
 In humbler walks, blest'd with my child and thee,
 I'd think it Eden in some lonely vale,
 Nor heave one sigh for these proud battlements.

COUNT.

COUNT.

Such flowery softness suits not matron lips.
 But thou hast mighty reasons for thy prayer:
 They should be mighty reasons, to persuade
 Their rightful lord to leave his large possessions,
 A soldier challeng'd, to decline the combat.

COUNTESS.

And are not prodigies then mighty reasons?
 The owl mistakes his season, in broad day
 Screaming his hideous omens; spectres glide,
 Gibbering and pointing as we pass along;
 While the deep earth's unorganized caves
 Send forth wild sounds and clamours terrible;
 These towers shake round us, though the untroubled air
 Stagnates to lethargy:—our children perish,
 And new disasters blacken every hour.
 Blood shed unrighteously, blood unappeas'd,
 Though we are guiltless, cries, I fear, for vengeance.

COUNT.

Blood shed unrighteously! have I shed blood?
 No; nature's common frailties set aside,
 I'll meet my audit boldly.

COUNTESS.

Mighty Lord!

O! not on us, with justice too severe,
 Visit the sin not ours!

COUNT.

What can this mean?
 Something thou wouldst reveal that's terrible.

COUNTESS.

Too long alas! it has weigh'd upon my heart;
 A thousand times I have thought to tell thee all;
 But my tongue falter'd, and refus'd to wound thee.

COUNT.

COUNT.

Distract me not, but speak.

COUNTESS.

I must. Your father
Was wise, brave, politick; but mad ambition,
(Heaven pardon him!) it prompts to desperate deeds.

COUNT.

I scarce can breathe. Pr'ythee be quick, and ease me.

COUNTESS.

Your absence on the Italian embassy
Left him, you know, alone to my fond care.
Long had some hidden grief, like a slow fire,
Wasted his vitals;—on the bed of death,
One object seem'd to harrow up his soul,
That picture of Alphonso, then before him:
On that his eye was set.—Methinks I see him,
His ashy hue, his grizzled bristling hair,
His palms spread wide. For ever would he cry,
“ That awful form, how terrible he frowns!
“ See how he bares his livid leprous breast,
“ And points the deadly chalice!”

COUNT.

Ha! even so!

COUNTESS.

Sometimes he'd seize my hands, and grasp them close,
And strain them to his hollow burning eyes;
Then falter out, “ I am, I am a villain;
“ Mild angel, pray for me; stir not, my child!
“ It comes again; oh! do not leave my side.”
At last, quite spent with mortal agonies,
His soul went forth; and heaven have mercy on him!

COUNT.

Enough. Thy tale has almost iced my blood.

Let me not think. Hortensia, on thy duty,
Suffer no breath like this to pass thy lips:
I will not taint my noble father's honour,
By vile suspicions suck'd from nature's dregs,
And the loose ravings of distemper'd fancy.

COUNTESS.

Yet O decline this challenge!

COUNT.

That hereafter.

Mean time prepare my daughter, to receive
A husband of my choice. Should Godfrey come,
(Strife might be so prevented,) bid her try
Her beauty's power. Stand thou, but neuter Fate!
Courage and art shall arm me for mankind.

[*Exeunt.*]

The end of the First Act.

C

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Chamber.

FABIAN, JAQUELINE.

FABIAN.

NO, no, it cannot be. My lord's commands
Were absolute, that none should visit him.

JAQUELINE.

What need he know it?

FABIAN.

But perchance he should,
The study of my life has been his pleasure;
Nor will I risk his favour, to indulge
Such unavailing curiosity.

JAQUELINE.

Call it not so; I have kind counsel for him;
Which, if he follow it, may serve to speed
The hour of his deliverance, and appease
The unjustly-anger'd count.

FABIAN.

Pray be content;
I dare not do it. Have this castle's walls
Hous'd thee nine years, and art thou yet to learn
The temper of the count? Serv'd and obey'd,
There lives not one more gracious, liberal;
Offend him, and his rage is terrible;
I'd rather play with serpents. But, fair Jaqueline,

Setting

Setting aside the comeliness and grace
Of this young rustick, which I own are rare,
And baits to catch all women, pr'ythee tell,
Why are you thus solicitous to see him?

J A Q U E L I N E.

In me 'twere base to be indifferent:
He was my life's preserver, nay preserv'd
A life more precious: yes, my dear young mistress!
But for his aid, the eternal sleep of death
Had clos'd the sweetest eyes that ever beam'd.
Aloof and frighted stood her coward train,
And saw a furious band of desperate slaves,
Inur'd to blood and rapine, bear her off.

F A B I A N.

What! when the gang of outlaw'd Thiery
Rush'd on her chariot near the wood of Zatt,
Was he the unknown youth who succour'd her?
All good betide him for it!

J A Q U E L I N E.

Yes, 'twas he.

From one tame wretch he snatch'd a half-drawn sword,
And dealt swift vengeance on the ruffian crew.
Two at his feet stretch'd dead, the rest amaz'd
Fled, muttering curses, while he bore her back,
Unhurt but by her fears.

F A B I A N.

He should be worship'd,

Have statues rais'd to him; for, by my life,
I think there does not breathe another like her.
It makes me young to see her lovely eyes:
Such charity! such sweet benevolence!
So fair, and yet so humble! prais'd for ever,
Nay wonder'd at, for nature's rarest gifts,
Yet lowlier than the lowest.

C 2

J A Q U E L I N E.

THE COUNT

JAQUELINE.

Is it strange,

Fair Adelaide and I, thus bound to him,
Are anxious for his safety? What offence
(And sure 'twas unintended) could provoke
The rigorous count thus to imprison him?

FABIAN.

My lord was ever proud and cholerick;
The youth, perhaps unused to menaces,
Brook'd them but ill, and darted frown for frown;
This stirr'd the count to fury. But fear nothing;
All will be well; I'll wait the meetest season,
And be his advocate.

JAQUELINE.

Mean time repair to him;

Bid him be patient; let him want no comfort,
Kind care can minister. My lady comes.
May I assure her of your favour to him?

FABIAN.

Assure her that the man who sav'd her life,
Is dear to Fabian as his vital blood.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

To JAQUELINE, ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

I sent thee to his prison. Quickly tell me,
What says he, does he know my sorrow for him?
Does he confound me with the unfeeling crew,
Who act my father's bidding? Can his love
Pity my grief, and bear this wrong with patience?

JAQUELINE.

I strove in vain to enter. Fabian holds him,
By the count's charge, in strictest custody;

And

And fearful to awake his master's wrath,
Though much unwilling, bars me from his presence.

ADELAIDE.

Unkind old man! I would myself entreat him,
But fear my earnest look, these starting tears,
Might to the experience of his prying age
Reveal a secret, which in vain I strive
To hide from my own breast.

J AQUELINE.

Alas, dear lady,

Did not your tongue reveal it, your chang'd mien,
Once lighter than the airy woodnymph's shade,
Now turn'd to pensive thought, and melancholy,—
Involuntary sighs,—your cheek, unlike
Its wonted bloom, as is the red-vein'd rose
To the dim sweetness of the violet,—
These had too soon betrayed you. But take heed;
The colour of our fate too oft is ting'd
Mournful, or bright, but from our first affections.

ADELAIDE.

Foul disproportion draws down shame on love,
But where's the crime in fair equality?
Mean birth presumes a mind uncultivate,
Left to the coarseness of its native soil,
To grow like weeds, and die, like them, neglected;
But he was born my equal; lineag'd high,
And titled as our great ones: then his soul——
The blood of Valois, circling in his veins,
Could add no jot to his true loyalty.

J AQUELINE.

How easy is our faith to what we wish!
His story may be feign'd.

C 3

ADELAIDE.

THE COUNT.

ADELAIDE.

I'll not mistrust him.

Since the bless'd hour that brought him first to save me,
How often have I listen'd to the tale!

It varies not, for truth's invariable.

He needs no vouchers. Gallant, generous youth!

Thy sport, Misfortune, from his infant years!—

Wilt thou pursue him still?

JAQUELINE.

Indeed 'tis hard.

ADELAIDE.

But oh the pang, that these ungrateful walls
Should be his prison! Here if I were aught,
His presence should have made it festival;
These gates untouch'd had leap'd to give him entrance,
And songs of joy made glad the way before him.
Instead of this, think what has been his welcome!
Drag'd by rude hands before a furious judge,
Insulted, menac'd, like the vilest slave,
And doom'd unheard to ignominious bondage.

JAQUELINE.

Your father knew not of his service to you.

ADELAIDE.

No, his indignant soul disdain'd to tell it.
Great spirits, conscious of their inborn worth,
Scorn by demand to force the praise they merit;
They feel a flame beyond their brightest deeds,
And leave the weak to note them, and to wonder.

JAQUELINE.

Suppress these strong emotions. The count's eye
Is quick to find offence. Should he suspect.
This unpermitted passion, 'twould draw down

More

More speedy vengeance on the helpless youth,
Turning your fatal fondness to his ruin.

ADELAIDE.

Indeed I want thy counsel. Yet, oh leave me!
Find if my gold, my gems, can ransom him.
Had I the world, it should be his as freely.
I would go kirtled like a village-maid,
Plain all my life, in nature's simplest dress,
Rather than deck'd with proud superfluous wealth,
While one more worthy, wanting life's poor means,
Upbraids the insulting splendour of abundance.

JAQUELINE.

Trust to my care. The countess comes to seek you;
Her eye is this way bent. Conceal this grief;
All may be lost, if you betray such weakness. [Exit.

SCENE III.

ADELAIDE, *alone*.

O Love! thy sway makes me unnatural.
The tears, which should bedew the grave, yet green,
Of a dear brother, turning from their source,
Forget his death, and fall for Theodore.

SCENE IV.

To her, the Countess.

COUNTESS.

Come near, my love! When thou art from my side,
Methinks I wander like some gloomy ghost,
Who, doom'd to tread alone a dreary round

Remembers the lost things that made life precious,
Yet sees no end of cheerless solitude.

ADELAIDE.

We have known too much of sorrow; yet 'twere wise
To turn our thoughts from what mischance has ravish'd,
And rest on what it leaves. My father's love—

COUNTESS.

Was mine, but is no more. 'Tis pass'd, 'tis gone.
That ray at least I hoped would never set,
My guide, my light, through fortune's blackest shades;
It was my dear reserve, my secret treasure;
I stored it up, as misers hoard their gold,
Sure counterpoise for life's severest ills:
Vain was my hope; for love's soft sympathy,
He pays me back harsh words, unkind reproof,
And looks that stab with coldness.

ADELAIDE.

Oh, most cruel!

And, were he not my father, I could rail;
Call him unworthy of thy wondrous virtues;
Blind, and unthankful for the greatest blessing
Heaven's ever-bounteous hand could shower upon him.

COUNTESS.

No, Adelaide; we must subdue such thoughts:
Obedience is thy duty, patience mine.
Just now, with stern and peremptory briefness,
He bade me seek my daughter, and dispose her
To wed by his direction.

ADELAIDE.

The saints forbid!

To wed by his direction! Wed with whom?

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

I know not whom. He counfels with himself.

ADELAIDE.

I hope he cannot mean it.

COUNTESS.

'Twas his order.

ADELAIDE.

O madam! on my knees—

COUNTESS.

What would my child?

Why are thy hands thus rais'd? Why stream thine eyes?

Why flutters thus thy bosom? Adelaide,

Speak to me; tell me, wherefore art thou thus?

ADELAIDE.

Surprise and grief—I cannot, cannot speak.

COUNTESS.

If 'tis a pain to speak, I would not urge thee.

But can my Adelaide fear aught from me?

Am I so harsh?

ADELAIDE.

Oh no! the kindest, best!

But, would you save me from the stroke of death,

If you would not behold your daughter, stretch'd,

A poor pale corse, and breathless, at your feet,

Oh, step between me and this cruel mandate!

COUNTESS.

But this is strange!—I hear your father's step:

He must not see you thus: retire this moment.

I'll come to you anon.

ADE-

ADELAIDE.

Yet, ere I go,
 O make the interest of my heart your own;
 Nor, like a senseless, undiscerning thing,
 Incapable of choice, nor worth the question,
 Suffer this hasty transfer of your child:
 Plead for me strongly, kneel, pray, weep for me;
 And angels lend your tongue the power to move him!
[Exit,

SCENE V.

COUNTESS, *alone.*

What can this mean, this ecstasy of passion!
 Can such reluctance, such emotions, spring
 From the mere nicety of maiden fear?
 The source is in her heart; I dread to trace it.
 Must then a parent's mild authority
 Be turn'd a cruel engine, to inflict
 Wounds on the gentle bosom of my child?
 And am I doom'd to register each day
 But by some new distraction?—Edmund! Edmund!
 In apprehending worse even than thy loss,
 My sense, confused, rests on no single grief;
 For that were ease to this eternal pulse,
 Which, throbbing here, says, blacker fates must follow;
 While Reason just has power enough to whisper,
Poor wretch! thy peace may come, when death comes with it,

SCENE

SCENE VI.

To her COUNT, AUSTIN.

COUNT.

I fought thee, and thou dost prevent me, Austin!
Welcome, thrice welcome! By our holy mother,
My house seems hallow'd, when thou enter'st it.
Tranquillity and peace dwell ever round thee;
That robe of innocent white is thy soul's emblem,
Made visible in unstain'd purity.
Once more thy hand.

AUSTIN.

My daily task has been,
So to subdue the frailties we inherit,
That my fair estimation might go forth,
Nothing for pride, but to an end more righteous:
For not the solemn trappings of our state,
Tiaras, mitres, nor the pontiff's robe,
Can give such grave authority to priesthood,
As one good deed of grace and charity.

COUNT.

We deem none worthier. But to thy errand!

AUSTIN.

I come commission'd from fair Isabel.

COUNT.

To me, or to the Countess?

AUSTIN.

Thus, to both.
For your fair courtesy, and entertainment,
She rests your thankful debtor. You, dear lady,

And

And her sweet friend, the gentle Adelaide,
Have such a holy place in all her thoughts,
That 'twere irreverence to waste her sense
In wordy compliment.

COUNTESS.

Alas, where is she?
Till now I scarce had power to think of her;
But 'tis the mournful privilege of grief,
To stand excus'd from kind observances,
Which else, neglected, might be deem'd offence.

AUSTIN.

She dwells in sanctuary at Saint Nicholas':
Why she took refuge there—

COUNT.

Retire, Hortensia.
I would have private conference with Austin,
No second ear must witness.

COUNTESS.

May I not,
By this good man, solicit her return?

COUNT.

Another time; it suits not now.—Retire.

[Exit COUNTESS.]

SCENE VII.

COUNT, AUSTIN.

COUNT.

You come commission'd from fair Isabel?

AUSTIN.

I come commission'd from a greater Power,
The Judge of thee, and Isabel, and all.

The offer of your hand in marriage to her,
 With your propos'd divorce from that good lady,
 That honour'd, injur'd lady, you sent hence,
 She has disclos'd to me.

COUNT.

—Which you approve not:
 So speaks the frowning prelude of your brow.

AUSTIN.

Approve not! Did I not protest against it,
 With the bold fervour of enkindled zeal,
 I were the pander of a love, like incest;
 Betrayer of my trust, my function's shame,
 And thy eternal soul's worst enemy.

COUNT.

Yet let not zeal, good man, devour thy reason:
 Hear first, and then determine. Well you know,
 My hope of heirs has perish'd with my son;
 Since now full seventeen years, the unfruitful curse
 Has fallen upon Hortensia. Are these signs,
 (Tremendous signs, that startle Nature's order!)
 Graves casting up their sleepers, earth convuls'd,
 Meteors that glare, my children's timeless deaths,
 Obscure to thee alone?—I have found the cause.
 There is no crime our holy Church abhors,
 Not one high Heaven more strongly interdicts,
 Than that commixture, by the marriage rite,
 Of blood too near, as mine is to Hortensia.

AUSTIN.

What! when the avenging arm is stretch'd abroad,
 Angry and red at man's enormities,
 Can more audacious sin dissolve the bolt,
 To healing dews of peace and blessedness?
 Too near of blood! oh, specious mockery!
 Where have these doubts been buried twenty years?
 Why wake they now? And am I closetted,

To

To sanction them? Take back your hasty words,
That call'd me wise or virtuous; while you offer
Such shallow fictions to insult my sense,
And strive to win me to a villain's office.

COUNT.

The virtue of our churchmen, like our wives,
Should be obedient meekness. Proud resistance,
Banding high looks, a port erect and bold,
Are from the canon of your order, priest.
Learn this, for here will I be teacher, Austin;
Our temporal blood must not be stirr'd thus rudely:
A front that taunts, a scanning, scornful brow,
Are silent menaces, and blows unstruck.

AUSTIN.

Not so, my lord; mine is no priestly pride:
When I put off the habit of the world,
I had lost all that made it dear to me,
And shook off, to my best, its heat and passions.
But can I hold in horror this ill deed,
And dress my brow in false-approving smiles?
No; could I carry lightning in my eye,
Or roll a voice like thunder in your ears,
So should I suit my utterance to my thoughts,
And act as fits my sacred ministry.

COUNT.

O father! did you know the conflict here;
How love and conscience are at war within me;
Most sure, you would not treat my grief thus harshly.
I call the saints to witness, were I master,
To wive the perfect model of my wish,
For virtue, and all female loveliness,
I would not rove to an ideal form,
But beg of heaven another like Hortensia—
Yet we must part.

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

And think you to excuse

A meditated wrong to excellence,
 By giving it acknowledgement and praise?
 Rather pretend insensibility;
 Feign that thou dost not see like other men;
 Hear'st with peculiar organ; hast no relish
 For all the good and wise admire in woman;
 So may abhorrence be exchang'd for wonder,
 Or men from cursing fall to pity thee.

COUNT.

You strive in vain; no power on earth can shake me.
 I grant my present purpose seems severe,
 Yet are there means to smooth severity,
 Which you, and only you, can best apply.

AUSTIN.

Oh no! the means hang there, there by your side:
 Enwring your fingers in her flowing hair,
 And with that weapon drink her heart's best blood;
 So shall you kill her, but not cruelly,
 Compar'd to this deliberate, lingering murder.

COUNT.

Away with this perverseness! Get thee to her;
 Tell her my heart is hers; here deep engrav'd
 In characters indelible, shall rest
 The sense of her perfections. Why I leave her,
 Is not from cloy'd or fickle appetite,
 (For infinite is still her power to charm;)—
 But Heaven will have it so.

AUSTIN.

Oh, name not Heaven!

'Tis too profane abuse.

COUNT.

Win her consent,

(I know

(I know thy fway is boundless o'er her will,)
 Then join my hand to blooming Isabel.
 Thus, will you do to all most worthy service;
 The curse, averted thus, shall pass from Narbonne;
 My house again may flourish; and proud Godfrey,
 Who now disputes, will ratify my title,
 Pleas'd with the rich succession to his heirs.

AUSTIN.

Has passion drown'd all sense, all memory?
 She was affianced to your son, young Edmund.

COUNT.

She never lov'd my son. Our importunity
 Won her consent, but not her heart, to Edmund.

AUSTIN.

Did not that speak her soul pre-occupied?
 Some undivulg'd and deep-felt preference?

COUNT.

Ha! thou hast rous'd a thought: This Theodore!
 (Dull that I was, not to perceive it sooner!)
 He is her paramour; by heaven, she loves him.
 Her coldness to my son; her few tears for him;
 Her flight; this peasant's aiding her; all, all,
 Make it unquestionable;—but he dies.

AUSTIN.

Astonishment! What does thy frenzy mean?

COUNT.

I thank thee, priest! thou serv'st me 'gainst thy will.
 That slave is in my power. Come, follow me.
 Thou shalt behold the minion's head struck off;
 Then to his mistress bear the ghastly present.

[*Exeunt.*]

The end of the Second Act.

ACT

ACT III. SCENE I.

*A Hall.*ADELAIDE, JAQUELINE *following.*

JAQUELINE.

WHERE do you fly? Heavens! have you lost all sense?

ADELAIDE.

Oh, would I had! for then I should not feel;
 But I have sense enough to know I am wretched,
 To see the full extent of misery,
 Yet not enough to teach me how to bear it.

JAQUELINE.

I did not think your gentleness of nature
 Could rise to such extremes.

ADELAIDE.

Am I not tame?

What are these tears, this wild dishevel'd hair?
 Are these fit signs for such despair as mine?
 Women will weep for trifles, bawbles, nothing,
 For very frowardness will weep as I do:
 A spirit rightly touch'd would pierce the air,
 Call down invisible legions to his aid,
 Kindle the elements.—But all is calm;
 No thunder rolls, no warning voice is heard,
 To tell my frantick father, this black deed
 Will sink him down to infinite perdition.

JAQUELINE.

Rest satisfied he cannot be so cruel
 (Rash as he is) to shed the innocent blood
 Of a defenceless, unoffending youth.

D

ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

He cannot be so cruel? Earth and heaven!
 Did I not see the dreadful preparations?
 The slaves, who tremble at my father's nod,
 Pale, and confounded, dress the fatal block.
 But I will fly; fall prostrate at his feet;
 If nature is not quite extinguished in him,
 My prayers, my tears, my anguish, sure will move him.

JAQUELINE.

Move him indeed! but to redoubled fury:
 He dooms him dead for loving Isabel;
 Think, will it quench the fever of his rage,
 To find he durst aspire to charm his daughter.

ADELAIDE.

Did I hear right? for loving Isabel?
 I knew not that before. Does he then love her?

JAQUELINE.

Nothing I heard distinctly; wild confusion
 Runs thro' the castle: every busy fool,
 All ignorant alike, tells different tales.

ADELAIDE.

Away; it cannot be. I know his truth.
 Oh! I despise myself, that for a moment
 (Pardon me, Love!) could suffer mean suspicion
 Usurp the seat of generous confidence.
 Think all alike unjust, my Theodore,
 When even thy Adelaide could join to wrong thee!

JAQUELINE.

Yet be advis'd—

ADELAIDE.

Oh, leave me to my grief.—
 To whom shall I complain? He but preserv'd
 My life a little space, to make me feel
 The extremes of joy and sorrow. Ere we met,
 My heart was calm as the unconscious babe,

That

That slumbers cradled 'tween the mother's breasts.
 From him I learn'd new wishes, new affections;
 To hope, to fear, to dread inquiring eyes,
 To find no relish in what pleas'd before,
 And sigh for blifs that's unattainable.

S C E N E II.

To them FABIAN.

FABIAN.

Madam, my lord comes this way, and commands
 To clear these chambers; what he meditates,
 'Tis fit indeed were private. My old age
 Has liv'd too long, to see my master's shame.

ADELAIDE.

His shame, eternal shame! Oh, more than cruel!
 How shall I smother it! Fabian, what means he?
 My father—him I speak of—this young stranger—

FABIAN.

My heart is rent in pieces: deaf to reason,
 He hears no counsel but from cruelty.
 Good Austin intercedes, and weeps in vain.

J A Q U E L I N E.

There's comfort yet, if he is by his side.
 Look up, dear lady! Ha! that dying paleness—

ADELAIDE.

It is too much:—Oh Jaqueline!

J A Q U E L I N E.

She faints;

Her gentle spirits could endure no more.
 Ha! paler still! Fabian, thy arm; support her.
 She stirs not yet.

FABIAN.

Soft, bear her gently in.

[ADELAIDE is carried out.]

D 2

SCENE

THE COUNT

SCENE III.

FABIAN, *alone*. [*looking after her*.]

Fair creature! if this counterfeit of death
 Could lie like lead upon thee, till this deed,
 That cries so loud 'gainst Narbonne, were forgot,
 Thou would'st be happier far than we who wake,
 Wishing in vain for blindness and oblivion.

[*Exit*.]

SCENE IV.

COUNT, *followed by* AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

I do believe thee very barbarous;
 Nay fear thy reason touch'd; for such wild thoughts,
 Such bloody purposes, could ne'er proceed
 From any sober judgment;—yet thy heart
 Will sure recoil at this.

COUNT.

Why, think so still;
 Think me both ruffian-like, and lunatick:
 One proof at least I'll give of temperate reason,—
 Not to be baited from my fix'd design
 By a monk's ban, or whining intercession.

AUSTIN.

Thou canst not mean to do it.

COUNT.

Trust thine eyes.
 Thybalt! bring forth the prisoner; bid my marshal
 Prepare an axe. The ceremony's short;
 One stroke, and all is past. Before he die,
 He shall have leave to thank your godliness,
 For speeding him so soon from this bad world.

AUSTIN.

Where is the right, the law, by which you doom him?

COUNT.

My will's the law.

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

A venerable law!

The law by which the tyger tears the lamb,
 And kites devour the dove. A lord of France,
 Drefs'd in a little delegated sway,
 Strikes at his sovereign's face, while he profanes
 His functions, trusted for the general good.

COUNT.

I answer not to thee.

AUSTIN.

Answer to heaven.

When call'd to audit in that sacred court,
 Will that supremacy accept thy plea,
I did commit foul murder, for I might?

COUNT.

Soar not too high; talk of the things of earth,
 I'll give thee ear. Has not thy penitent,
 Young Isabel, disclos'd her passion to thee?

AUSTIN.

Never.

COUNT.

Just now, her coldness to my son,
 You said, bespoke her heart preoccupied.
 The frail and fair make you their oracles;
 Pent in your close confessionals you sit,
 Bending your reverend ears to luscious secrets;
 While with their heaving breasts, and love-fraught eyes,
 Devoutly they sigh out each amorous wish;
 Till flesh and spirit mingling flame with flame,
 Their glowing senses fix at last on man,
 And priests may quench the fire a lover kindled.

AUSTIN.

Scoffer, no more! stop thy licentious tongue;
 Turn inward to thy bosom, and reflect—

D 3

COUNT.

THE COUNT

COUNT.

That is, be fool'd. Yet will I grant his life,
On one condition.

AUSTIN.

Name it.

COUNT.

Join my hand

To Isabel.

AUSTIN.

Not for the world.

COUNT.

He dies.

SCENE V.

To the COUNT and AUSTIN, THEODORE brought in.

Come near, thou wretch! When call'd before me first,
With most unwonted patience I endur'd
Thy bold avowal of the wrong thou did'st me;
A wrong so great, that, but for foolish pity,
Thy head that instant should have made atonement;
But now, convicted of a greater crime,
Mercy is quench'd: therefore prepare to die.

THEODORE.

Indeed! and is this all?—'tis somewhat sudden.
I was a captive long 'mongst infidels,
Whom falsely I deem'd savage, since I find
Even Tunis and Algiers, those nests of ruffians,
Might teach civility to polish'd France,
If life depends but on a tyrant's frown.

COUNT.

Out with thy holy trumpery, priest! delay not;
Or, if he trusts in Mahomet, and scorns thee,
Away with him this instant.

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

Hold, I charge you!

THEODORE.

The turban'd misbeliever makes some show
Of justice, in his deadly processes;
Nor drinks the fabre blood thus wantonly,
Where men are valued less than nobler beasts.—
Of what am I accused?

COUNT.

Of insolence;
Of bold presumptuous love, that dares aspire
To mix the vileness of thy sordid lees
With the rich current of a baron's blood.

AUSTIN.

My heart is touch'd for him.—Much injur'd youth,
Suppress awhile this swelling indignation;
Plead for thy life.

THEODORE.

I will not meanly plead;
Nor were my neck bow'd to his bloody block,
If love's my crime, would I disown my love.

COUNT.

Then, by my soul, thou diest.

THEODORE.

And let me die:
With my last breath I'll bless her. My spirit, free
From earth's encumbering clogs, shall soar above thee.
Anxious, as once in life, I'll hover round her;
Teach her new courage to sustain this blow,
And guard her, tyrant! from thy cruelty.

COUNT.

Ha! give me way!

AUSTIN.

Why, this is madness, youth:
You but inflame the rage, you should appease.

D 4

THEODORE.

THE COUNT.

THEODORE.

He thinks me vile. 'Tis true indeed I seem so:
 But, though these humble weeds obscure my outside,
 I have a soul disdains his contumely;
 A guiltless spirit, that provokes no wrong,
 Nor from a monarch would endure it offer'd:
 Uninjur'd, lamb-like; but a lion, rous'd.—
 Know, too injurious lord, here stands before thee
 The equal of thy birth.

COUNT.

Away, base clod.—

Obeys me, slaves.—What, all amaz'd with lies?

AUSTIN.

Yet, hear him, Narbonne: that ingenuous face
 Looks not a lie. Thou said'st thou wert a captive;—
 Turn not away! we are not all like him.
 Something, I know not what, most friendly to thee,
 Nay, more than friendly, like a parent's care,
 And anxious, even to pain, bids me enquire—

THEODORE.

My story's brief. My mother, and myself,
 (I then an infant) in my father's absence,
 Were on our frontiers seiz'd by Saracens.

COUNT.

A likely tale! a well-devis'd imposture!
 Who will believe thee?

AUSTIN.

O deceiving hope!

A gleam shoots through me; and my startled soul,
 Fearful and eager, shrinks from its own wish:
 I shake, and scarce have power enough to beg thee,
 Go on, say all.

THEODORE.

To the fierce Bashaw, Hamet,

That

That scourge and terrour of the Christian coasts,
Were we made slaves at Tunis.

AUSTIN.

Ha! at Tunis!
Seiz'd with thy mother? Lives she, gentle youth?

THEODORE.

Ah no, dear saint! fate ended soon her woes,
In pity ended. On her dying couch,
She pray'd for blessings on me.

AUSTIN.

Be thou blessed!

O fail not nature, but support this conflict!
'Tis not delusion sure. It must be he.—
But one thing more;—did she not tell the too
Thy wretched father's name?

THEODORE.

The lord of Clarinsal.

Why do you look so earnestly upon me?
If yet he lives, and thou know'st Clarinsal,
Tell him my tale.

AUSTIN.

Mysterious providence!

COUNT.

[*Aside.*

What's this? the old man trembles and turns pale.

THEODORE.

He will not let his offspring's timeless ghost
Walk unappeas'd, but on this cruel head
Exact full vengeance for his slaughter'd son.

AUSTIN.

O giver of all good! eternal Lord!
Am I so blest'd, at last, to see my son?

THEODORE.

Let me be deaf for ever, if my ears
Deceive me now! did he not say his son?

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

I did, I did; let this, and this convince thee,
I am that Clarinsal; I am thy father.

COUNT.

[*Aside.*]

Why works this foolish moisture to my eyes?
Down Nature! what hast thou to do with vengeance?

THEODORE.

Oh sir! thus bending, let me clasp your knees;
Now, in this precious moment, pay at once
The long, long debt of a lost son's affection.

COUNT.

[*Aside.*]

Destruction seize them both! Must I behold
Their transports, ne'er perhaps again to know
A son's obedience, or a father's fondness!

AUSTIN.

Dear boy! what miracle preserv'd thee thus,
To give thee back to France?

THEODORE.

No miracle,

But common chance. A warlike bark of Spain
Bore down, and seiz'd our vessel, as we rov'd
Intent on spoil: (for many times, alas!
Was I compell'd to join their hated league,
And strike with infidels.) My country known,
The courteous captain sent me to the shore;
Where vain were my fond hopes to find my father;
'Twas desolation all: a few poor swains
Told me, the rumour ran he had renounc'd
A hated world, and here in Languedoc
Devoted his remains of life to Heaven.

AUSTIN.

They told thee truth; and heaven shall have my prayers,
My

My soul pour'd out in endless gratitude,
For this unhop'd, immeasurable blessing;
But thou shalt have my care, my love, my life.

COUNT.

Thus far, fond man! I have listen'd to the tale;
And think it, as it is, a gross contrivance,
A trick, devis'd to cheat my credulous reason,
And thaw me to a woman's milkiness.

AUSTIN.

And art thou so unskill'd in nature's language,
Still to mistrust us? Could our tongues deceive,
Credit, what ne'er was feign'd, the genuine heart:
Believe these pangs, these tears of joy and anguish.

COUNT.

Or true, or false, to me it matters not.
I see thou hast an interest in his life,
And by that link I hold thee. Would'st thou save him,
(Thou know'st already what my soul is set on,)
Teach thy proud heart compliance with my will:
If not—but now no more. Hear all, and mark me;—
Keep special guard, that none, but by my order,
Pass from the castle. By my hopes of heaven,
His head goes off who dares to disobey me.
Farewel!—if he be dear to thee, remember.

[Exit COUNT.]

SCENE VI.

AUSTIN, THEODORE.

AUSTIN.

If he be dear to me! my vital blood!
Image of her my soul delighted in,
Again she lives in thee. Yes, 'twas that voice,
That kindred look, rais'd such strong instinct here,
And kindled all my bosom at thy danger.

I

THEODORE.

THEODORE.

But must we bear to be thus tamely coop'd
By such insulting, petty despotism?
I look to my unguarded side in vain;
Had I a sword—

AUSTIN.

—Think not of vengeance now;
A mightier arm than thine prepares it for him.
Pass but a little space, we shall behold him
The object of our pity, not our anger.
Yes, he must suffer; my rapt soul foresees it:
Empires shall sink; the pond'rous globe of earth
Crumble to dust; the sun and stars be quench'd;
But O eternal Father! of thy will,
To the last letter, all shall be accomplish'd.

THEODORE.

So let it be! but if his pride must fall,
Ye saints who watch o'er loveliness and virtue,
Confound not with his crimes her innocence!
Make him alone the victim; but with blessings
Bright, and distinguish'd, crown his beauteous daughter!

AUSTIN.

Well she deserves all blessings; nor is he
Exempt from every touch of manly virtue;
The natural current of his soul is noble;
But passion sometimes will run contrary,
As drives the furious eddy 'gainst the stream.—
But dost thou know the maid?

THEODORE.

You much surprise me;
Did you not hear, but now, my love confess'd?
Avow'd, even at the peril of my life?
Yes, charming Adelaide, my heart's first passion,

Here

Here thy dear image lives. If I renounce her,
Let Misery hunt my footsteps through the world,
And heaven's bright portals shut me out hereafter.

AUSTIN.

Oh most disastrous love! My son, my son,
Thy words are poniards here. Alas! I thought
(So thought the tyrant, and for that he rag'd,)
The vows exchang'd 'tween Isabel and thee,
Thwarted the issue of his wild designs.

THEODORE.

I knew not Isabel, beyond a moment
Pass'd in surprise and haste. But thanks to fortune!
Let him be still deceiv'd. Our loves unknown,
My gentle Adelaide escapes his harshness.
Some smiling chance again may bring me to her:
The same blest'd walls enclose us; here, perhaps,
She walk'd, and here even now I tread her footsteps;
She spoke, she sigh'd; I draw the air she breath'd;
And with such gales should holy shrines be incens'd.

AUSTIN.

O, had malignant fortune toil'd to blast him,
Thus had she snar'd him in this fatal passion!—
And does young Adelaide return thy love?

THEODORE.

Blest'd powers, she does! How can you frown, and
hear it?
Her generous soul, first touch'd by gratitude,
Soon own'd a kinder, warmer sympathy.
Soft as the fanning of a turtle's plumes,
The sweet confession met my enraptur'd ears.

AUSTIN.

What can I do?—Come near, my Theodore!
Dost thou believe my affection?

THEODORE.

THE COUNT

THEODORE.

Can I doubt it?

AUSTIN.

Think what my bosom suffers when I tell thee,
It must not, cannot be.

THEODORE.

My love for Adelaide!

AUSTIN.

Deem it delicious poison; dash it from thee:
Thy bane is in the cup.

THEODORE.

O, bid me rather
Tear out my throbbing heart; I'd think it mercy,
To this unjust, this cruel interdiction.
That proud, unfeeling Narbonne, from his lips
Well might such words have fallen; but thou, my father—

AUSTIN.

—And fond, as ever own'd that tender name.
Not I, my son, not I prevent this union,
(To me 'tis bitterness to cross thy wish,)
But nature, fate, and heaven, all, all forbid it.
Oh, when thou know'st what yet is hid in darkness,
When the deep mystery of thy birth's unfolded,
Thy tears indeed may fall for Adelaide,
(And I will mingle mine) but from that hour,
As thou would'st shun perdition, must thou fly her.

THEODORE

Impossible!—and why not now reveal it?
Busy imagination tortures worse,

Forming

Forming conceits more grim and terrible,
Than fate can shape in direst certainty.

AUSTIN.

Not now;—ill suited is the time, the place.
We must withdraw, where heaven alone can hear us:
Then must thou stretch thy soul's best faculties;
Call every manly principle to steel thee;
And, to confirm thy name, secure thy honour,
Make one great sacrifice of love to justice. [Exit.

The end of the Third Act.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*A Chamber.*ADELAIDE, *alone.*

WOE treads on woe.—Thy life, my Theodore,
 Thy threaten'd life, sav'd from the impending stroke,
 Just gave a moment's respite to my heart:
 And now a mother's grief, with pangs more keen,
 Wakes every throbbing sense, and quite o'erwhelms me,
 Her soul wrapt up in his, to talk thus to her!
 Divorce her, leave her, wed with Isabel,
 And call on heaven to sanctify the outrage!
 How could my father's bosom meditate
 What savage tongues would falter even to speak?
 But see, he comes——

SCENE II.

To her AUSTIN, and JAQUELINE.

O, let me bend to thank you;
 In this extreme distress, from you alone
 (For my poor art is vain,) can she hope comfort.

AUSTIN.

How heard she the ill tidings? I had hopes
 His cooler reason would subdue the thought;
 And heaven in pity to her gentle virtues,
 Might spare her knowing how he meant to wrong them.

JAQUELINE.

The rumour of the castle reach'd her first;
 But his own lips confirm'd the barbarous secret.

Sternly

Sternly, but now, he enter'd her apartment,
 And, stamping, frown'd her women from her presence;
 After a little while they had pass'd together,—
 His visage flush'd with rage and mingled shame,
 He burst into the chamber where we waited,
 Bade us return, and give our lady aid;
 Then, covering his face with both his hands,
 Went forth like one half-craz'd.

A D E L A I D E.

O good, kind father!

There is a charm in holy eloquence,
 (If words can medicine a pang like this,)
 Perhaps may sooth her. Sighs, and trickling tears,
 Are all my love can give. As I kneel by her,
 She gazes on me, clasps me to her bosom;
 Cries out, my child! my child! then, rising quick,
 Severely lifts her streaming eyes to heaven;
 Laughs wildly, and half sounds my father's name;
 Till, quite o'erpower'd, she sinks from my embrace,
 While, like the grasp of death, convulsions seize her.

A U S T I N.

Remorseless man! this wound will reach her heart,
 And when she falls, his last, best prop falls with her.
 And see, the beauteous sorrow moves this way:
 Time has but little injur'd that fair fabrick;
 But cruelty's hard stroke, more fell than time,
 Works at the base, and shakes it to the centre.

S C E N E III.

To them, the C O U N T E S S.

C O U N T E S S.

Will then these dreadful sounds ne'er leave my ears?
 " Our marriage was accur'd; too long we have liv'd
 " In bonds forbid; think me no more thy husband;

E

" The

“ The avenging bolt, for that incestuous name,
 “ Falls on my house; and spreads the ruin wide,
 “ For our offence, o’er this afflicted land.”
 These were his words.

ADELAIDE.

O ponder them no more!
 Lo! where the blessed minister of peace,
 (He whose mild counsels wont to charm your care,)
 Is kindly come to cheer your drooping soul;
 And see, the good man weeps.

COUNTESS.

What! weep for me!

AUSTIN.

Ay, tears of blood from my heart’s inmost core,
 And count them drops of water from my eyes,
 Could they but wash out from your memory
 The deep affliction you now labour with.

COUNTESS.

Then still there is some pity left in man:
 I judged you all by him, and so I wrong’d you.
 I would have told my story to the sea,
 When it roar’d wildest; bid the lionsess,
 Robb’d of her young, look with compassion on me;
 Rather than hoped in any form of man
 To find one drop of human gentleness.

AUSTIN. [*approaching her.*]

Most honour’d lady!—

COUNTESS.

—Pray you, come not near me,
 I am contagion all; some wicked sin,
 Prodigious, unrepented sin, has stain’d me.
 Father, ’twould blast thee but to hear the crimes,

This

This woman, who was once the wife of Raymond,
This curs'd forsaken woman here, has acted.

AUSTIN.

What slanderous tongue dare thus profane your virtue?
Madam, I know you well; and, by my order,
Each day, each hour of your unspotted life,
Might give as fair a lesson to the world,
As churchmen's tongues can preach, or saints co¹ practise.

COUNTESS.

He charges me with all—Thou poor Hortensia!
What guilt, prepost'rous guilt, is thine to answer!

ADELAIDE.

In mercy wound not thus your daughter's soul.

AUSTIN.

A villain or a madman might say this.

COUNTESS.

What shall I call him? He, who was my husband;
My child, thy father;—He'll disclaim thee too.
But let him cast off all the ties of nature,
Abandon us to grief and misery,
Still will I wander with thee o'er the world:
I will not wish my reason may forsake me,
Nor sweet oblivious dulness steep my sense,
While thy soft age may want a mother's care,
A mother's tenderness, to wake and guard thee.

ADELAIDE.

And, if the love of your dear Adelaide,
Her reverence, duty, endless gratitude
For all your angel goodness, now can move you,
Oh, for my sake (lest quite you break my heart,)
Wear but a little outside show of comfort;
Awhile pretend it, though you feel it not,
And I will bless you for deceiving me.

E 2

COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

I know 'tis weakness, folly, to be mov'd thus;
 And these, I hope, are my last tears for him.
 Alas, I little knew, (deluded wretch!)
 His riotous fancy glow'd with Isabel;
 That not a thought of me possess'd his mind,
 But coldness and aversion; how to shun me,
 And turn me forth a friendless wanderer.

AUSTIN.

Vain were the attempt to palliate injuries,
 Too foul in their own nature to receive
 Whiteness from words: but, lady, for your peace,
 Think, conscience is the deepest source of anguish:
 A bosom, free like yours, has life's best sunshine;
 'Tis the warm blaze in the poor herdsman's hut;
 That, when the storm howls o'er his humble thatch,
 Brightens his clay-built walls, and cheers his soul.
 You pay the forfeit of the aggressor's wrong,
 Suffering the pangs, which guilt alone should suffer.

COUNTESS.

O father, reason is for moderate sorrow;
 For wounds which time has balm'd; but mine are fresh,
 All bleeding fresh, and pain beyond my patience.
 Ungrateful! cruel! how have I deserv'd it!—
 Thou tough, tough heart, break for my ease at once!

AUSTIN.

I scarce, methinks, can weigh him with himself;
 Vexations strange have fallen on him of late;
 And his distemper'd fancy drives him on
 To rash designs, where disappointment mads him.

COUNTESS.

Ah no! his wit is settled, and most subtle;
 Pride and wild blood are his distemper, father.

But

But here I bid farewell to grief and fondness:
 Let him go kneel, and sigh to Isabel;
 And may he as obdurate find her heart,
 As his has been to me!

AUSTIN.

Why that's well said;—
 'Tis better thus, than with consuming sorrow
 To feed on your own life. Give anger scope:
 Time then at length will blunt this killing sense;
 And peace, he ne'er must know again, be your's.

COUNTESS.

I was a woman, full of tenderness;
 I am a woman, stung by injuries.
 Narbonne was once my husband, my protector;
 He was—what was he not?—He is my tyrant;
 The unnatural tyrant of a heart that lov'd him.
 With cool deliberate baseness he forsakes me;
 With scorn as steadfast shall my soul repay it.

AUSTIN.

You know the imminent danger threatens him
 From Godfrey's fearful claim?

COUNTESS.

Too well I know it;
 A fearful claim indeed!

AUSTIN.

To-morrow's sun
 Will see him at these gates; but trust my faith,
 No violence shall reach you. The rash count
 (Lost to himself) by force detains me here.
 Vain is his force:—our holy sanctuary,
 Whate'er betides, shall give your virtue shelter;
 And peace and piety alone approach you.

THE COUNT

COUNTESS.

O that the friendly bosom of the earth
Would close on me for ever!

AUSTIN.

These ill thoughts
Must not be cherish'd. That all righteous power
Whose hand inflicts, knows to reward our patience:
Farewel! command me ever as your servant,
And take the poor man's all, my prayers and blessing.

[Exit AUSTIN,

SCENE IV.

COUNTESS, ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

Will you not strive to rest? Alas! 'tis long,
Since you have slept. I'll lead you to your couch;
And gently touch my lute, to wake some strain
May aid your slumbers.

COUNTESS.

My sweet comforter!
I feel not quite forlorn when thou art near me,

ADELAIDE.

Lean on my arm.

COUNTESS.

No, I will in alone.

My sense is now unapt for harmony.
But go thou to Alphonso's holy shrine;
There, with thy innocent hands devoutly rais'd,
Implore his fainted spirit, to receive
Thy humble supplications; and to avert
From thy dear head, the still-impending wrath,
For one black deed, that threatens all thy race.

[Exit COUNTESS.

SCENE

S C E N E V.

ADELAIDE, *alone.*

For thee my prayers shall rise, not for myself,
 And every kindred saint will bend to hear me.
 But O my fluttering breast!—'tis Theodore!
 How sad, and earnestly he views that paper!
 It turns him pale. Beshrew the envious paper!
 Why should it steal the colour from that cheek,
 Which danger ne'er could blanch? He sees me not.
 I'll wait; and should sad thoughts disturb his quiet,
 If love has power, with love's soft breath dispel them.

[ADELAIDE *retires.*]

S C E N E VI.

THEODORE, *with a paper.*

My importunity at last has conquer'd:
 Weeping, my father gave, and bade me read it.
 'Tis there, (he cried,) the mystery of thy birth;
 There view thy long divorce from Adelaide.
 Why should I read it? Why with rav'nous haste
 Gorge down my bane? The worst is yet conceal'd;
 Then wherefore, eager for my own destruction,
 Inquire a secret, which, when known, must sink me?
 My eye starts back from it; my heart stands still;
 And every pulse, and motion of my blood,
 With prohibition, strong as sense can utter,
 Cries out, *beware!*—But does my sight deceive?
 Is it not she? Up, up, you black contents:
 A brighter object meets my ravish'd eyes.
 Now let the present moment, Love, be thine!
 For ill, come when it may, must come untimely.

S C E N E VII.

To him ADELAIDE.

ADELAIDE.

Am I not here unwish'd for?

E 4

THEODORE.

THEODORE.

My best angel!

Were seas between us, thou art still where I am.
 I bear thy precious image ever round me,
 As pious men the relicks they adore.
 Scarce durst I hope to be so blest to see thee,
 But could not wish a joy beyond thy presence.

ADELAIDE.

O Theodore! what wondrous turns of fortune
 Have given thee back to a dear parent's arms!
 And spite of all the horrors which surround me,
 And worse, each black eventful moment threatens,
 My bosom glows with rapture at the thought
 Thou wilt at last be blest'd.

THEODORE.

But one way only

Can I be blest'd. On thee depends my fate.
 Lord Raymond, harsh and haughty as he is,
 And adverse to my father's rigid virtue,
 When he shall hear our pure unspotted vows,
 Will yield thee to my wishes;—but, curs'd stars!
 How shall I speak it?

ADELAIDE.

What?

THEODORE.

That holy man,

That Clarinsal, whom I am bound to honour,
 Perversely bids me think of thee no more.

ADELAIDE.

Alas! in what have I offended him?

THEODORE

Not so; he owns thy virtues, and admires them,

Bat

But with a solemn earnestness that kills me,
He urges some mysterious dreadful cause,
Must funder us for ever.

ADELAIDE.

O, then fly me!

I am not worth his frown; be gone this moment;
Leave me to weep my mournful destiny,
And find some fairer, happier maid, to bless thee.

THEODORE.

Fairer than thee! O heavens! the delicate hand
Of nature, in her daintiest mood, ne'er fashion'd
Beauty so rare. Love's roseate deity,
Fresh from his mother's kisses, breath'd o'er thy mould
That soft ambrosial hue.—Fairer than thee!
'Twere blasphemy in any tongue but thine,
So to disparage thy unmatched perfections.

ADELAIDE.

No, Theodore, I dare not hear thee longer;
Perhaps indeed there is some fatal cause.

THEODORE.

There is not, cannot be. 'Tis but his pride,
Stung by resentment 'gainst thy furious father—

ADELAIDE.

Ah no; he is too generous, just, and good,
To hate me for the offences of my father.
But find the cause. At good Alphonso's tomb
I go to offer up my orisons:
There bring me comfort, and dispel my fears;
Or teach me, (oh, hard thought!) to bear our parting.
[Exit ADELAIDE.]

SCENE

THE COUNT

SCENE VIII.

THEODORE, *alone.*

She's gone, and now, firm fortitude, support me!
For here I read my sentence; life, or death.

[Takes out the Paper.]

"Thou art the grandson of the good Alphonso,
"And Narbonne's rightful lord"—Ha! is it so?
Then has this boist'rous Raymond dar'd insult me,
Where I alone should rule:—yet not by that
Am I condemn'd to lose her. Thou damn'd scroll!
I fear thou hast worse poison for my eyes.
"Long were the champions, bound for Palestine,
"('Thy grandfire then their chief,) by adverse winds
"Detain'd in Naples; where he saw, and lov'd,
"And wedded secretly, Vicenza's daughter;
"For, till the holy warfare should be closed,
"They deem'd it wise to keep the rite conceal'd.
"The issue of that marriage was thy mother;
"But the same hour that gave her to the world,
"For ever closed the fair one's eyes who bore her.
"Foul treason next cut short thy grandfire's thread;
"Poison'd he fell——

[THEODORE pauses, and AUSTIN who has been some time behind, advances.]

SCENE IX.

AUSTIN, THEODORE.

AUSTIN.

By Raymond's felon father,
Who, adding fraud to murder, forg'd a will,
Devising to himself and his descendants,
Thy rights, thy titles, thy inheritance.

THEODORE.

Then I am lost—

AUSTIN,

AUSTIN.

Now think, unkind young man,
Was it for nought I warn'd thee to take heed,
And smother in its birth this dangerous passion?
The Almighty arm, red for thy grandfire's murder,
Year after year has terribly been stretch'd
O'er all the land, but most this guilty race.

THEODORE.

The murderer was guilty, not his race.

AUSTIN.

Great crimes, like this, have lengthen'd punishments.
Why speak the fates by signs and prodigies?
Why one by one falls this devoted line,
Accomplishing the dreadful prophecy,
That none should live to enjoy the fruits of blood?
Why, (owning every virtue in the maid,)
When thou but talk'st of this prepost'rous union,
Feels my divining soul such chill reluctance?
They are not sent in vain, such awful warnings!
But wave this argument.—Thou wilt be call'd
(I know him well, all process he disdains
But violence and war,) to prove thy right,
By combat with the count.

THEODORE.

In arms I'll meet him;
To-morrow; now.—

AUSTIN.

And, reeking with his blood,
Offer the hand, which shed it, to his daughter?

THEODORE.

Ha!

I

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

Does it shake thee? Come, my Theodore,
 Let not a gust of love-sick inclination
 Root, like a sweeping whirlwind, from thy soul
 All the fair growth of noble thoughts and virtue,
 Thy mother planted in thy early youth;
 All that good man, companion of thy bonds,
 Thy better father, father of thy mind,
 Whose worth so late was witness'd by thy tears;—
 O rashly tread not down the promis'd harvest,
 They toil'd to rear to the full height of honour!

THEODORE.

Would I had liv'd unknown in penury,
 Rather than thus! Distraction!—Adelaide!

SCENE X.

To them ADELAIDE, FABIAN,

ADELAIDE.

O, whither shall I fly!

THEODORE.

What means my love!

Why thus disturb'd?

ADELAIDE.

The castle is beset;
 The superstitious, fierce, inconstant people,
 Madder than storms, with weapons caught in haste,
 Menace my father's life; rage, and revile him;
 Call him the heir of murderous usurpation;
 And swear they'll own no rightful lord but Godfrey.

AUSTIN.

Blind wretches! I will hence and try my power
 To allay the tumult. Follow me, my son!

[Exit AUSTIN.
 SCENE

SCENE XI.

ADELAIDE, THEODORE, FABIAN.

ADELAIDE.

Go not defenceless thus; think on thy safety:
See yonder porch opes to the armoury;
There coats of mailed proof, falchions, and casques,
And all the glittering implements of war,
Stand terribly arranged. Fabian will guide,
And aid to arm thee.

THEODORE.

Heavens! 'twas what I wish'd.
Yes, Adelaide, I go to fight for him:
Thy father shall not fall ingloriously;
But, when he sees this arm strike at his foes,
Shall own, thy Theodore deserv'd his daughter.

[*Excunt, ADELAIDE at one door, THEODORE, and
FABIAN at the other.*]

The end of the Fourth Act.

ACT

THE COUNT
ACT V. SCENE I.

A Hall.

COUNT, AUSTIN, FABIAN, *Attendants with prisoners.* THEODORE *in armour behind.*

COUNT.

HENCE to a dungeon with those mutinous slaves;
There let them prate of prophecies and visions;
And when coarse fare and stripes bring back their senses,
Perhaps I may relent, and turn them loose
To new offences, and fresh chastisement.

FABIAN.

You bleed, my lord!

[*Prisoners led out.*]

COUNT.

A scratch.—Death! to be bay'd
By mungrels! curs! They yelp'd, and show'd their fangs;
Growl'd too as they would bite. But was't not poor,
Unlike the generous strain of Godfrey's lineage,
To stir the rabble up in nobles' quarrels,
And bribe my hinds and vassals to assault me.

AUSTIN.

They were not stirr'd by Godfrey.

COUNT.

Who then stirr'd them?

Thyself perhaps. Was't thou? And yet I wrong thee;
Thou did'st preach peace; and straight they crouch'd and
shrunken;
More tam'd by the cold med'cine of the tongue,
Than losing the hot drops my steel drew from them.

AUSTIN.

I might perhaps have look'd for better thanks,
Than taunts to pay my service.—But no matter.—

My

My son too serv'd thee nobly; he bestrode thee,
And drove those peasants back, whose staves and clubs,
But for his aid, had shiver'd that stout frame:
But both, too well accusom'd to thy transports,
Nor ask, nor hope thy courtesy.

COUNT.

Your pardon!

I knew my life was saved, but not by whom;
I wish'd it not, yet thank him. I was down,
Stunn'd in the inglorious broil; and nought remember,
More than the shame of such a paltry danger.
Where is he?

AUSTIN.

Here.

[THEODORR *advances.*

COUNT.

[*starting.*

Ha! angels shelter me!

THEODORE.

Why starts he thus?

COUNT.

Are miracles renew'd?

Art thou not risen from the mould'ring grave?
And in the awful majesty of death,
'Gainst nature, and the course of mortal thought,
Assum'st the likeness of a living form,
To blast my soul with horror?

THEODORE.

Is he mad?

Or means he thus to mock me?

COUNT.

Answer me!

Speak some of you, who have the power to speak;
Is it not he?

FABIAN.

THE COUNT.

FABIAN.

Who, good my lord?

COUNT.

Alphonso.

His form, his arms, his air, his very frown.
 Lord of these confines, speak, declare thy pleasure!

THEODORE.

Dost thou not know me then?

COUNT.

Ha! Theodore?

This sameness, not resemblance, is past faith.
 All statues, pictures, or the likenesses kept
 By memory, of good Alphonso living,
 Are faint and shadowy traces, to this image,

FABIAN.

Hear me, my lord, so shall the wonder cease.
 The very arms he wears, were once Alphonso's.
 He found them in the stores, and braced them on,
 To assist you in your danger.

COUNT.

'Tis most strange.

I strive, but cannot conquer this amazement:
 I try to take them off; yet still my eyes
 Again are drawn, as if by magick on him.

AUSTIN. [*Aside to THEODORE.*]

Hear you, my son?

THEODORE.

Yes, and it wakes within me,
 Sensations new till now.

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

To-morrow's light
Will show him wonders greater.—Sir, it pleas'd you,
(Wherefore you best can tell) to make us here
Your prisoners; but the alarm of your danger
Threw wide your gates, and freed us. We return'd
To give you safeguard.—May we now depart?

COUNT.

Ay, to the confines of the farthest earth;
For here thy sight unhinges Raymond's soul.
Be hid, where air or light may never find thee;
And bury too that phantom.

[Exit COUNT with his Attendants.]

S C E N E II.

AUSTIN, THEODORE.

THEODORE.

Infotence!

Too proud to thank our kindness! yet, what horroir
Shook all his frame, when thus I stood before him!

AUSTIN.

No wonder. A prediction terrible,
Not yet in all fulfill'd, hangs over him;
And, if the presage of my breast deceive not,
In thee 'twill be accomplish'd. He affects
To call it visionary fear, and scorn it;
But, like a curb in the fierce courser's jaw,
The strong controlment, mightier than his force,
Reins in his pride.

THEODORE.

'Tis fate then stirs within him;

F

And

And darkly intimates his hour draws near.
But was this all?

AUSTIN.

The statue of thy grandfire
(Thy very figure as thou stood'st before him,
Arm'd just as thou art,) seem'd to move, and live;
That breathing marble, which the people's love
Rear'd near his tomb, within our convent's walls.
Anon I'll lead thee to it.

THEODORE.

Let me hence,
To shake these trappings off.

AUSTIN.

Wear them, and mark me—
Ere night thy kinsman, Godfrey, will be master
Of all thy story: a tried messenger
Bears my dispatch to him; not far from hence,
Advancing with his train to meet Lord Raymond,
He rests till morning. He is brave, and just,
And will support thy claim. Should proof and reason
Fail with the usurper, thou must try thy sword
(And heaven will strike for thee) in combat with him.
The conscious flash of this thy grandfire's mail,
Worse than the horrors of the fabled Gorgon,
That curdled blood to stone, will shrink his sinews,
And cast the wither'd boaster at thy feet.

THEODORE.

Grant it, ye powers! but not to shed his blood:
The father of my Adelaide, that name—

AUSTIN.

Is dearer far than mine;—my words are air;
My counsels pass unmark'd. But come, my son!

To

To-night my cell must house thee. Let me show thee
 The humble mansion of thy lonely father;
 Proud once, and prosperous; where I have wept, and pray'd,
 And lost, in cold oblivion of the world,
 Twice nine long years: thy mother, and thyself,
 And God, were all my thoughts.

THEODORE.

Ay, to the convent!

For there, my love, my Adelaide expects me. [*Aside.*
 [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E III.

COUNT, FABIAN.

COUNT.

By hell, this legend of Alphonso's death
 Hourly gains ground.

FABIAN.

They talk of nought besides;
 And their craz'd notions are so full of wonder,
 There's scarce a common passage of the times,
 But straight their folly makes it ominous.

COUNT.

Fame, that like water widens from its source,
 Thus often swells, and spreads a shallow falsehood.
 At first, a twilight tale of village terrour,
 The hair of boors and beldams bristled at it;
 (Such bloodless fancies wake to nought but fear:)
 Then, heard with grave derision by the wise,
 And, from contempt, unsearch'd and unrefuted,
 It pass'd upon the laziness of faith,
 Like many a lie, gross, and impossible.

F 2

FABIAN.

FABIAN.

À lie believ'd may in the end, my lord,
 Prove fatal as a written gospel truth.
 Therefore—

COUNT.

Take heed; and ere the lightning strike,
 Fly from the sulphurous clouds.—I am not dull;
 For, bright as ruddy meteors through the sky,
 The thought flames here, shall light me to my safety.
 Fabian, away! Send hither to me straight
 Renschild, and Thybalt. [*Exit FABIAN.*] They are young
 and fearless.

SCENE IV.

COUNT, *alone.*

'Thy flight, ungrateful Isabel, compels me
 To this rude course. I would have all with kindness;
 Nor stain the snow-white flower of my true love
 With spots of violence. But it must be so.
 This lordly priest, this Clarinsal, or Austin,
 Like a true churchman, by his calling tainted,
 Prates conscience; and in craft abets Earl Godfrey,
 That Isabel may wed his upstart son.
 Let Rome dart all her lightnings at my head,
 Till her grey pontiff singe in his own fires:
 Spite of their rage, I'll force the sanctuary,
 And bear her off this night, beyond their power;
 My bride, if she consents; if not, my hostage.

SCENE

SCENE V.

To the COUNT, two Officers.

Come hither, Sirs. Take twenty of your fellows;
Post ten at the great gate of Nicholas',
The rest, by twos, guard every avenue
Leads from the convent to the plain or castle.
Charge them (and as their lives shall answer it,)
That none but of my train pass out, or enter,

FIRST OFFICER.

We will, my lord, about it instantly.

COUNT.

Temper your zeal, and know your orders first.
Take care they spill no blood:—no violence,
More than resisting who would force a passage:
The holy drones may buzz, but have no stings.
I mean to take a bawble from the church,
A reverend thief stole from me. Near the altar,
(That place commands the centre of the aisle,)
Keep you your watch. If you espy a woman,
(There can be only she,) speed to me straight;
You'll find my station near Alphonso's porch.
Be swift as winds, and meet me presently. [*Exeunt severally.*]

THE COUNT

SCENE VI.

The inside of a Convent, with ailes and Gothick arches, part of an altar appearing on one side; the statue of ALPHONSO in armour in the centre. Other statues and monuments also appearing. ADELAIDE veiled, rising from her knees before the statue of ALPHONSO.

ADELAIDE.

Alas! 'tis mockery to pray as I do.
 Thoughts fit for heaven, should rise on seraphs' wings,
 Unclog'd with aught of earth; but mine hang here,
 Beginning, ending all in Theodore.
 Why comes he not? 'Tis torture for the unblest'd,
 To suffer such suspense as my heart aches with.
 What can it be,—this secret, dreadful cause,
 This shaft unseen, that's wing'd against our love?
 Perhaps—I know not what.—At yonder shrine
 Bending, I'll seal my irrevocable vow:
 Hear, and record it, choirs of saints and angels!
 If I am doom'd to sigh for him in vain,
 No second flame shall ever enter here;
 But, faithful to thy fond, thy first impression,
 Turn thou, my breast, to every sense of joy,
 Cold as the pale-cy'd marbles which surround me.
 [ADELAIDE withdraws.]

SCENE VII.

AUSTIN, THEODORE.

AUSTIN.

Look round, my son! This consecrated place
 Contains the untimely ashes of thy grandfire.
 With all the impious mockery of grief,
 Here were they laid by the dire hand which sped him.

Since

Since that black hour, the thunder scarce has slept;
 Nature seem'd fearful of her wonted course;
 As if the angry spirit of Alphonso,
 Driving the loosen'd orbs in storm and fire,
 Wreck'd all this elemental, vast machine,
 To break the tenour of men's peaceful souls.
 There stands his statue; were a glass before thee,
 So would it give thee back thy outward self.

THEODORE.

And may the power which fashion'd thus my outside,
 With all his nobler ornaments of virtue
 Sustain my soul! till generous emulation
 Raise me by deeds to equal his renown,
 And—

AUSTIN.

—To avenge him. Not by treachery,
 But casting off all thoughts of idle love,—
 Of love ill-match'd, unhappy, ominous,—
 To keep the memory of his wrongs; do justice
 To his great name, and prove the blood you spring from.

THEODORE.

O, were the bold possessor of my rights
 A legion arm'd, the terrors of his sword
 Resistless as the flash that strikes from heaven,
 Undaunted would I meet him. His proud crest
 Should feel the dint of no unpractis'd edge.
 But, while my arm assails her father's life,
 The unnatural wound returns to my own breast,
 And conquest loses Adelaide for ever.

AUSTIN.

The barbarous deed of Raymond's father lost her.

THE COUNT

THEODORE.

Pierce not my soul thus. Can you love your son,—
 Can you behold these eyes, that stream for her,—
 Know every hope or wish my breast can form,
 My waking thought, the murmur of my dreams,
 All, all are Adelaide,—and coldly tell me,
 Without one tear unmov'd thus, I must lose her?
 But where, where is she? [*looking out.*] Heavenly innocence?
 See the dear faint kneels at the altar's foot;
 See her white hands with fervent clasps are rais'd;
 Perhaps for me. Have you a heart, my father,
 And bid me bear to lose her?—Hold me not;—
 I come, I fly, my life, my all! to join thee. [*Exit.*]

SCENE VIII.

AUSTIN, *alone.*

Return, return, rash boy! Pernicious chance!
 One glance from her will quite destroy my work,
 And leave me but my sorrow for my labour. [*Follows him.*]

SCENE IX.

COUNT, *alone.*

Am I turn'd coward, that my tottering knees
 Knock as I tread the pavement?—'Tis the place;
 The fombrous horror of these long-drawn ailes.
 My footsteps are beat back by nought but echo,
 Struck from the caverns of the vaulted dead;
 Yet now it seem'd as if a host pursued me.
 The breath that makes my words, sounds thunder-like.
 Sure 'twas a deep-fetch'd groan—No;—hark, again!—
 Then

Then 'tis the language of the tombs; and see!

[*Pointing to the statue of ALPHONSO.*

Like their great monarch, he stands rais'd above them.

Who's there?

SCENE X.

To the COUNT, two Officers.

FIRST OFFICER.

My Lord, where are you?

COUNT.

Here.—Speak man!

Why do you shake thus? Death! your bloodless cheeks

Send fear into me.—You, Sir, what's the matter?

SECOND OFFICER.

We have found the lady.

COUNT.

My good fellows, where?

FIRST OFFICER.

Even from this spot you may yourself behold her,

Though dim the light; but from a winking lamp,

A woman's form and habit both are plain.

Her face is towards the altar.

COUNT.

[*looking out*

Blasts upon me!

Wither my eyes for ever!—Ay, 'tis she;

Austin with Theodore; he joins their hands:—

Destruction seize them! O dull, tardy fool!

My love and my ambition both defeated!

A marriage in my sight! Come forth, come forth!

[*Draws a dagger.*

Arise grim Vengeance, and wash out my shame!

Ill-fated girl! A bloody Hymen waits thee. [*Rushes out.*]

S C E N E XI.

TWO OFFICERS.

FIRST OFFICER.

His face is black with rage, his eyes flash fire;
I do not like this service.

SECOND OFFICER.

No, nor I.

But, if 'tis sin or sacrilege, not we,
But he who set us on, must answer it,

FIRST OFFICER.

Heard you that shriek?—It thunders. By my soul,
I feel as if my blood were froze within me.
Speak to me. See he comes, [*Officers retire.*]

S C E N E XII.

COUNT, *with a bloody dagger.*

COUNT.

The deed is done.

Hark, the deep thunder rolls. I hail the sign;
It tells me in loud greetings, I'm reveng'd.

S C E N E XIII.

THEODORE, *with his sword drawn.*

THEODORE.

Where, where's the assassin?

COUNT,

COUNT.

Boy, the avenger's here.
Behold, this dagger smokes with her heart's blood!
That thou stand'st there to brave me, thank that mail,
Or, traitor, thou had'st felt me.—But 'tis done.

THEODORE.

Oh, monstrous! monstrous!

COUNT.

Triumph now o'er Narbonne;
Boast how a stripling and a monk deceiv'd
The easy Count; but, if thou lov'st thy bride,
Take that, and use it nobly. [*Throws down the dagger.*]

THEODORE.

'Gainst thy heart,
Barbarian, would I use it,—but look there;
There are ten thousand daggers.

AUSTIN, *without.*

Ring out the alarm,
Fly all; bring aid, if possible, to save her.

SCENE XIV.

*To them, ADELAIDE wounded, and supported by AUSTIN.
THEODORE advances to her, and assists in supporting and
bringing her forward. Some of the COUNT's attendants
enter from the Castle, with lighted torches.*

COUNT.

Ha! Lightning shiver me!

ADELAIDE

ADELAIDE.

My Lord; my father!

Oh, bear me to his feet.

AUSTIN.

Thou man of blood,
 Past utterance lost, see, what thy rage has done!

COUNT.

Ruin! despair! my child, my Adelaide!
 Art thou the innocent victim of my fury?

ADELAIDE.

I am indeed. I know not my offence;
 Yet sure 'twas great, when my life answers it,
 Will you forgive me now?

COUNT.

Oh misery!
 Had I unnumber'd lives, I'd give them all,
 To lengthen thine an hour. What frenzy seiz'd me!
 That veil, the glimmering light, my rage, deceiv'd me,
 Unnatural wound! detested parricide!—
 Good youth, in pity strike this monster dead!

ADELAIDE.

Listen not to his ravings.

[To THEODORE,

THEODORE.

My heart's treasure!
 Is this the issue of my promis'd joys?
 'Tis my black destiny has murder'd thee;
 The stroke was meant for me: but my quick hand
 Shall speed it home; and thus I follow thee—

AUSTIN.

Hold, desperate boy!

ADELAIDE,

ADELAIDE.

Alas, my Theodore!

I struggle for a little gasp of breath;
 Draw it with pain, and sure, in this last moment,
 You will observe me.

THEODORE.

Torture!

ADELAIDE.

Live, I charge you:

Forget me not, but love my memory.
 If I was ever dear to thee, my father,
 (Those tears declare I was,) will you not hear me,
 And grant one wish to your expiring child?

COUNT.

Speak, tell me quickly, thou dear suffering angel!

ADELAIDE.

Be gentle to my mother; her kind nature
 Has suffer'd much; she will need all your care:
 Forsake her not; and may the All-merciful
 Look down with pity on this fatal error;
 Bless you—and—oh—

[Dies.]

COUNT.

She dies in prayer for me;
 Prays for me, while her life streams from my stroke.
 What prayers can rise for such a wretch as I am?
 Seize me, ye fiends! rouse all your stings and torments!
 See, hell grows darker, as I stalk before them.

THEODORE.

[After looking some time at ADELAIDE's body.]

She's gone;—stand off;—no, think not I will live.
 This load of being is intolerable;
 And, in a happier world, my soul shall join her. [Rushes out.]

AUSTIN.

AUSTIN.

Observe, and keep him from all means of death.

S C E N E XV.

COUNTESS *with Women, FABIAN, and other Attendants.* AUSTIN *runs to her.*

COUNTESS.

Whence were those cries? what meant that fearful bell?
Who shall withhold me? I will not return.
Is there a horror I am stranger to?

AUSTIN.

There is; and so beyond all mortal patience,
I can but wish you stripp'd of sense and thought,
That it may pass without destroying you.

COUNTESS.

What is it? speak—

AUSTIN, *looking towards the body.*

Turn not your eyes that way,

For there, alas—

COUNTESS.

O Lord of earth and heaven!

Is it not she? my daughter, pale and bleeding?
She's cold, stark cold:—can you not speak to me?
Which of you have done this?

COUNT.

'Twas ease till now;

Fall, fall thick darkness, hide me from that face.

AUSTIN.

Rise, Madam, 'tis in vain.—Heaven comfort her!

COUNTESS.

Shall I not strive to warm her in my breast?
She is my all; I have nothing left but her.
You cannot force me from her. Adelaide!
My child, my lovely child! thy mother calls thee.

She

She hears me not;—she's dead.—Oh God!—I know thee;—
 Tell me, while I have sense, for my brain burns;
 Tell me—yet what avails it? I'll not curse;—
 There is a power to punish.

COUNT.

Look on me!

Thou had'st much cause to think my nature cruel;
 I wrong'd thee fore, and this was my last deed.

COUNTESS.

Was thine? thy deed? Oh, execrable monster!
 Oh, greatly worthy of thy blood-stain'd fire!
 A murderer he, and thou a parricide!
 Why did thy barbarous hand refrain from me?
 I was the hated bar to thy ambition;
 A stab, like this, had set thee free for ever;
 Sav'd thee from shame, upbraiding, perjuries;—
 But she—this innocent—what had she done?

COUNT.

I thank thee. I was fool enough, or coward,
 To think of life one moment, to atone
 By deep repentance for the wrongs I did thee,
 But hateful to myself, hated by thee,
 By heaven abandon'd, and the plague of earth,
 This, this remains, and all are satisfied.

[Snatches up the dagger, and stabs himself.]

Forgive me, if 'tis possible—but—oh—

[Dies.]

COUNTESS. *[after looking some time distractedly.]*

Where am I? Ruin, and pale death surround me.
 I was a wife; there gasping lies my husband;
 A mother too; there breathless lies my child.
 Look down, oh heaven! look down with pity on me!
 I know this place; it is the house of prayer:
 Here, in my days of happiness, I have kneel'd,

Pouring

Pouring my praise for all the good that blest'd me.
 I'll kneel once more. Hear me, great God of nature!
 For this one boon let me not beg in vain;
 O, do not mock me with the hopes of death;
 These pangs, these struggles, let them be my last;
 Release thy poor, afflicted, suffering creature;
 Take me from misery, too sharp to bear,
 And join me to my child!

[Falls in the arms of her attendants.]

AUSTIN.

Peace rest upon her!

Hard was your lot you lovely innocents;
 But palms, eternal palms, above shall crown you.
 For this rash man,—yet mercy's infinite. *[The COUNT.]*
 You stand amaz'd. Know, this disastrous scene,
 Ending the fatal race, concludes your sorrows.
 To-morrow meet we round this sacred shrine;
 Then shall you hear at full a tale of wonder;
 The rightful lord of Narbonne shall be own'd;
 And heav'n in all its ways be justified. *[Curtain falls.]*

4 AP 54

EPILOGUE.

E P I L O G U E;

Written by EDMOND MALONE, Esq.

Spoken, at the original exhibition of this tragedy at Covent
Garden theatre, by Miss YOUNGE.

*O*F all the laws by tyrant custom made,
The hardest sure on dramatists are laid.
No easy task, in this enlighten'd time,
It is, with art "to build the lofty rhyme;"
To choose a fable, nor too old nor new;
To keep each character distinctly true;
The subtle plot with happy skill combine,
And chain attention to the nervous line;
With weighty, clashing interests, to perplex,
Through five—long acts,—each person—of each sex;
And then at last, by dagger or by bowl,
"To freeze the blood, and harrow up the soul."—
All this achiev'd, the bard at ease carouses,
And dreams of laurels and o'erflowing houses.
Alas, poor man! his work is done but half;—
He has made you cry,—but he must make you laugh;
And the same engine, like the fabled steel *,
Must serve at once to wound you and to heal.

Our Bard "of this had ta'en too little care,"
And by a friend besought me to appear.
"Madam," he said, "so oft you have grac'd the scene,
"An injur'd princess, or a weeping queen;
"So oft been used to die, in anguish bitter,
"And then start up,—to make the audience titter,

* The Spear of Achilles.

*Myfus et Æmonia juvenis qua cuspide vulnus
Senserat, hac ipsa cuspide sensit opem.*

PROPERT. Lib. II. El. 1.

G

"That

E P I L O G U E.

" *That, doubtless, you know best what is in vogue,*
 " *And can yourself invent an epilogue:*
 " *You can supply our authour's tardy quill,*
 " *And gild the surface of his tragick pill;*
 " *Your ready wit a recipe can bring,*
 " *For this capricious, serio-comick thing."*—
 A Recipe for epilogues!—" Why not ?
 " *Have you each vaunting Chronicle forgot ?*
 " *Have we not recipes each day, each hour,*
 " *To give to mortal man immortal power ?*
 " *To give the ungraceful, timid speaker, breath,*
 " *And save his quivering eloquence from death† ?*
 " *Have we not now a geometrick school,*
 " *To teach the cross-leg'd youth—to snip by rule ?‡*
 " *When arts like these each moment meet your eyes,*
 " *Why should receipts for Epilogues surprise ?"*
 Well, Sir, I'll try—I first advance with simper,
 (Forgotten quite my tragick state and whimper)—
 " *Ladies, to-night my fate was surely hard:*
 " *What could possess our inconsiderate bard,*
 " *A wife to banish,—that his miss might wed,*
 " *When modern priests allow them both one bed."*
 Thus I'll begin;—But it will never do,
 Unless some recent anecdotes ensue.—
 Has no frail dame been caught behind a screen?
 No panting virgin flown to Gretna Green?—
 Have we no news of Digby—or the Dutch?—
 At some rich Nabob can't I have a touch?

† A quack medicine has been long recommended, in a printed advertisement, for its efficacy in composing the agitated nerves of those who speak in publick.

‡ A tailor has lately informed the publick in most of the newspapers, that he fits his customers by *geometrick rules*.

E P I L O G U E.

*Or the fam'd quack, who, but for duns terrestrial,
Had gain'd the Indies by his bed celestial §?
" Bravo, Miss Younge; the thought my friend will bless;
" This modish medley must ensure success."
Won by this smooth-tongued flatterer, I've dar'd
To do what ev'n our fluent authour fear'd.
If I succeed to-night, the trade I'll follow,
And dedicate my leisure to Apollo:
Before my house a board shall straight be hung,
With—Epilogues made here by Dr. Younge;
Nor will I, like my breth'ren, take a fee;—
Your hands and smiles are wealth enough for me.*

THE following EPILOGUE, which was spoken on the first two nights of the exhibition of this tragedy, was obligingly written by R. J. GOODENOUGH, Esq. who did not know that an Epilogue had been prepared for it by Mr. Malone, at the Authour's request.

*"TIS an old maxim with dramatick sages,
To draw their tragick lore from distant ages.
The ruder manners, and impetuous vein,
Which no trim rules of etiquette restrain;
The gen'rous plainness of th' unpractis'd heart,
Nature's free powers yet unsubdued by art;
The rough simplicity,—the darksome time,—
Improve the pathos,—heighten the sublime:
While all the poet's deepest skill might fail,
If us'd to decorate some modern tale.*

*In me you've seen a wife,—who, though abhorr'd,
Abandon'd, threaten'd by her tyrant Lord,*

§ " If he were not prevented by unprecedented cruelty, he would in a few years have become one of his majesty's richest and most respectable subjects." Dr. Graham's *Advertisement from the Temple of Hymen.*

Did

E P I L O G U E.

*Did patient long her firm affection prove,
 'Midst the keen tortures of insulted love.
 You've seen a maiden—fair, and nobly born;
 Attach'd to merit, wretched and forlorn;
 And then, her lover, in a mean disguise,
 In native worth above all titles rise:
 A priest—with zeal and holy ardour fraught,
 Practise the lessons which his preaching taught.
 —But while at scenes like these your bosoms glow;
 You'll recollect, they happen'd—long ago.
 In our gay times, a wife forsaken, scorn'd,
 Had ne'er in doleful guise her fortune mourn'd;
 But with frail schemes, in fashionable course,
 Had been the first to furnish a divorce.
 The maiden had her peasant swain despis'd,
 And stars, and lace, and liv'ries, more had priz'd.
 Nor could, in this, perhaps, her choice be blam'd;
 For say, what lover now had other merit claim'd?
 As for our priests—in rev'rence let them rest;—
 On modern saints—the least that's said, is best.
 Of manners, then, so different in their kind,
 The old are rude,—the new are too refin'd.
 That authour well deserves our warmest praise,
 Who those examples which we need displays;
 Who, 'midst the placid murmurings of Ton,
 Rolls the rough tide of Gothick force along;
 And when true worth seems withering at the root,
 Turns the rich soil whence towering virtues shoot.
 Ne'er can the Muse be more our nature's friend,
 Than when she strives its wide extremes to blend;
 Bids simple truth with polish'd fashion join,
 And ancient strength with modern grace combine.*

4 AP 54
 F I N I S.

